CAUTION TO WELL-SINKERS.—Many well-sinkers, a class of men who ought to know better, appear to be utterly ignorant of the fact that wells frequently contain an invisible water, which will as certainly drown those who plunge over head into it, even for a very few minutes, as the visible and ordinary water ever can do,—much more certainly, indeed, inasmuch as the invisible carbonic acid is more insidious, and neither excites those convulsive efforts which prevent choking by the reception of water into the lungs, nor buoys up the drowning body till the vital air is reached. A case of drowning in choke damp, as miners call it, has just occurred at Douglas, in the Isle of Man, where, in consequence of a stoppage in a pipe leading from a well, a workman uncovered the well, and began at once to descend by means of steps made in the shaft. He was presently heard to fall into the water. The owner followed to see what was amiss: he also fell to the bottom. A third man with a rope fastened to his body then ventured down, and while trying to tie a rope to one of the sufferers, the foul air began to take effect on him also, and it was necessary to draw him up. Eventually the two bodies were got out by means of drags: both were dead. It would have cost little trouble to have ascertained, in the first place, whether the well contained foul air, by lowering a lighted candle; for wherever a candle will not burn in still air, there no man can breathe.

EMBELLISHMENT OF THE CITY OF LONDON HALLS.—On this subject, to which the council of the Art-Union of London forcibly drew attention in one of their reports some years ago (echoed by many of the journals), papers have been given in the present and previous number of the *Art-Journal* by Mr. E. Hall. He begins with the Mansion House, and gives his ideas of how it should be treated. The writer says,—"Few persons are aware of what we discovered with some surprize, since it is not noticed in the work of Britton and Pugin, that the *whole* of the interior of the block of building was an open court of elaborate character, similar to that part of an Italian palace, except that there are no galleries, but scarcely fitted for the inclement weather of the English climate, particularly if the guests passed through the open air, which would appear to have been the only direct access to the Egyptian Hall. It is also right to notice that the erection which now forms the saloon is of wood,—a fact which should be properly regarded, both in reference to durability and to danger of fire; and it might be a question to submit to the able architect to the corporation, whether a better use might be made of this central area, and advantage taken of the original decorative character of the internal elevations, and at the same time more light given by opening original windows to rooms which imperatively call for it, by inclosing the whole space under one roof at a much higher level, the light being admitted copiously through coffers formed by the intersection of beams in the ceiling, or by other well considered arrangement."

VENTILATION OF MINES.—On reading a late article on the ventilation of coal-mines, it occurred to me that the principle of Ericcson's caloric engine is peculiarly appropriate to that purpose. Perhaps this hint may set some of your philanthropic and scientific readers thinking on the subject. BORRAS.

COMPETITION AMONG BUILDERS.—"C. P." is most decidedly wrong in his statement in regard to building materials, for the market is open to every one, and very little advantage given to large purchasers: neither is it difficult for an architect (who thoroughly understands his profession) to prise work according to the existing rate of wages and price of materials: it is from ignorance in these matters that many architects encourage the system of contracting. As a builder I have had some experience in the working of the system, and find that it tends to deteriorate workmen, and bring into existence a lot of petty contractors, who have neither capital nor ability to execute good work. (*Here* they lose "reputation.") Then, after the most accurate estimate, a builder, calculating at times' prices, may become a heavy loser by an advance in materials or a strike for wages, which latter is far more common at a contract job than any other. (*Here* they lose "profit.") In my opinion there are only three things wanting to dispense with both public and private contracts, viz. honourable employers, competent architects, and respectable builders.—JACK PLANE.

RATING PUBLIC COMPANIES.—The property held by railway, gas, water, and other public companies amounts to an enormous sum; and from the want of any definite principle of rating such property to the relief of the poor, and other matters, great loss and inconvenience are constantly arising, and which, there is every reason to apprehend, will continue to be the case till some remedy is applied. We understand that many of the parochial authorities are therefore addressing the Poor-law Board on the subject, and entreating them to direct their attention to it, with the least possible delay, in order that a legislative enactment may be obtained in the ensuing session of Parliament, declaring the principle upon which all public companies shall in future be rated. A return of the sums of money wasted in litigation on this subject, through want of settled principles, would be a startling document.

A HINT TO ARCHITECTS.—The following passage occurs in Crawfurd's "Ava," and shows graphically how they correct architectural mistakes in Burmah—*Verbum sap.*:—"The workman who built the present palace (Ava) committed some professional mistake in the construction of the spire. The king remonstrated with him, saying it would not stand. The architect pertinaciously insisted on its stability and sufficiency, and was committed to prison for contumacy. Shortly after the spire fell *in a thunder-storm*, upon which the architect was sent for from prison, taken to the place of execution, and decapitated."

"GLASGOW IN 1952."—It is divided, like Edinburgh, into Old and New Town, and although it cannot boast of a romantic site, or of venerable antiquity equal to that queen of cities, still its older portions present features not less picturesque, whilst its noble cathedral is a monument of architecture to which its inhabitants point with justifiable pride. The modern division of Glasgow conveys an exalted idea of the wealth of its citizens and of that love of architectural magnificence which may be said to be characteristic of our northern compatriots, whilst the beauty of the material of which the Scottish cities are built attracts the admiration of Londoners accustomed to brick and compo. Besides this advantage in material, and their durable construction, many of the buildings in the classic style exhibit great merits in the design, although it must be said that others are devoid of it altogether. In Gothic architecture, judging from the churches which we saw, the Scottish architects have nearly everything to learn: we had not conceived it possible to erect such ungainly and poverty-stricken combinations of stone and lime. The Scotch, particularly in the west, appear to have absolutely no idea whatever of the proper nature of an edifice dedicated to the service of religion. The contrast between England and Scotland is in this respect infinitely in favour of the former, and the English architects have left their Scottish brethren immeasurably behind in ecclesiastical design.—*Art Journal.*

## TENDERS

For building additional wings and a chapel, Sussex County Hospital, Brighton; Mr. Herbert Williams, architect, London.

| | Wings. | Chapel. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fabian, Brighton | £5,794 | £1,421 | £7,215 |
| Terry, Brighton | 5,721 | 1,394 | 7,115 |
| Patching and Sons, Brighton | 5,600 | 1,355 | 6,955 |
| Cheesman and Sons, Brighton | 5,600 | 1,397 | 6,997 |
| Bushby, Little Hampton | 5,420 | 1,375 | 6,795 |
| Thompson and Croswell, London | 4,988 | 1,256 | 6,244 |

For building eight pair of semi-detached houses, at Stratford, Essex. Mr. Wm. Lambert, Architect.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cooper | £3,734 | 0 | 0 |
| Vaughan | 3,600 | 0 | 0 |
| Thompson | 3,578 | 0 | 0 |
| Reverott | 3,400 | 0 | 0 |
| Binder (accepted) | 3,344 | 0 | 0 |
| Sutton and Co. | 3,300 | 0 | 0 |
| Barley | 3,280 | 0 | 0 |


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| H H for engineering. | B black for shading |
| H for sketching. | B B ditto ditto. |
| H B hard and black for draw-ing. | B B B ditto ditto. |
| | B B B B ditto ditto. |
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## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"M. and Co." "A. B." (the Office of Works would seem to offer the best field for endeavour). "Mr. Wyman's Lead Table" (in reply to several inquirers, this table, noticed by us, is not obtainable). "C. B." (the article would require more corrections to fit it for publication than we have time to make). "R. K. P." "Q. E. D." (will find a letter at the office). "F. W." "M. J. S." (we have already mentioned the fact). "W. B. A." "Hon. Mr. G." (shall hear from us). "T. H. H." (the British Museum is now open. We do not know of a copy elsewhere). "Rev. E. T." "J. S. L." (it is against our rule to give addresses and prices. The competition referred to is not yet settled). "W. W." (must apply at the office). "J. J." "T. F. S." "F. C. C." "F. P." (we quite understand. We shall endeavour to see the buildings mentioned, being influenced, as Mr. P. is probably aware, by no sectarian considerations). "C. D. J." (may "see our journal at the newsroom," but evidently does not read it). "W. E. W." (shall appear). "W. S." "H. J. D." (it has been determined that the Ordnance survey of Fife shall be made on the six inch scale). "E. S. T." "W. B." "Artizan" (apply to Society of Arts. We gave the names some time ago). "Amelia" (next week). "A. F." (the original Northumberland House was built in 1606: Bernard Janssen and Gerard Christmas are supposed to have been the architects. The Strand façade alone of the old building remains. An account will be found in THE BUILDER for 17th May, 1851). "Competitor" (the medals are now in course of distribution to those who submitted plans for Exhibition building).

ERRATUM.—In our reference to the results of the "Baconian Philosophy," in last Number (first column of Leader), *for* "abortions" (a slip of the pen), *read* "lengthens."

"*Books and Addresses.*"—We have not time to point out books or find addresses.

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